Unit 6 Facilitation with Youth

In Unit 6, participants take the knowledge and interest they've developed in a specific issue and decide what action to take to address that issue. Planning their project starts with the activities planned in Unit 6, although fully planning the project may take more time than what's set aside for the unit. (See Project Planning with Youth for more information on facilitating the planning phase of your group's project.)

Unit 6A: Activity

Goal: To learn how brainstorming can drive decision-making.

Round Robin Brainstorming (pg. 131)

⇨ Think about: What sort of question(s) to ask youth to generate brainstorming. Questions should not be related to their chosen issue or service project yet.

⇨ When facilitating: Run the Round Robin the same way you will during the 6A Lesson. Each participant should contribute one answer (or pass) on each round, continuing until there are no new ideas left. Ideas should not be discussed or evaluated at this stage, but facilitators can clarify ideas as necessary.

⇨ When facilitating: Debrief quickly. Although you don't need to do a full debrief, it may help to have a short discussion about what the youth think of the method.

Unit 6A: Lesson

Goal: To select a possible strategy for addressing the group's top issue of concern.

Solution Selection (pg. 133, Handouts pgs. 142 and 102)

⇨ Think about: Having energizers planned for during or after the selection process as necessary. The process can be lengthy depending on the size of the group and number of ideas generated, so be prepared to take breaks or raise the energy with team-builders.

⇨ Think about: Time needed to facilitate. Depending on the size and interests of your group, this may take longer than the 30 minutes given in the *Roadmap*. Plan to be flexible.

⇨ Think about: Project parameters. Ensure that youth have a good idea of the time they'll have to plan the project and their limitations as far as location, budget, etc. Be aware ahead of time of any constraints around the project, and consider making a flip chart or handout to give to youth during the project selection. This can be done before or after the brainstorming process but should be done before youth start making decisions about which project to do. In this way, youth can be aware from the beginning of how much time, money, etc. are available to them and are more likely to choose a project that is feasible for them to accomplish. Limitations as far as project planning time are particularly important. While youth can work outside of scheduled planning time to complete project planning tasks, they should all agree to this before choosing a project that will require it.

⇨ Consider: Using the Alligator Mouth Decision-making Model to help facilitate this process. The Round Robin brainstorming method can be used for brainstorming, and then the rest of the process can follow the Alligator Mouth model.

⇨ Consider: Adding some time for participants to research a few of the top choice projects. For instance, if there are two or three projects that have a lot of support, have participants split into groups and research the feasibility of each project before making a final decision. Plan to use additional time if you want to do this.

⇨ Consider: Using a method besides Fist-to-Five to choose a final project if you have a large group. Although Fist-to-Five can work well with a smaller group, if you have more than about ten participants, it may be difficult to count the number of fingers participants are holding up.

⇨ When facilitating: Ensure that ideas are not being evaluated or debated during the Round Robin. Participants should not feel pressured to come up with a "good" idea.

⇨ When facilitating: Ensure that there is participant consensus before combining ideas or taking ideas off the list. As much as possible, all of the combining and removal of suggestions should be participant driven. If there isn't complete consensus around combining ideas or removing them, then leave them on the list without extensive discussion or debate. Consider using the "negative poll" from the Alligator Mouth model, e.g. "Does anyone *not* agree that this idea should be taken off the list?" If a participant doesn't agree, then you can just say, "All right, we'll leave it on the list for now." Then move on to the next idea.

⇨ When facilitating: If an idea seems impractical but there are several participants who have a lot of enthusiasm for it, give them the opportunity to brainstorm solutions to work around the limitations. They may be able to come up with a really good way to work within the limits and still complete the project.

Unit 6A: Reflection

Goal: To further develop the group's "We the People" statement.

Journal Entry: We the People (pg. 136)

⇨ Consider: Having youth reflect on the group's "We the People" statement in their journals after they've copied it. You can prompt youth to write or draw about how they feel about the proposed project or about being able to help meet a community need.

⇨ When facilitating: Debrief the session's activities as group. Consider using the DIGA model to help youth see how they can use these tools in other ways.

Unit 6B: Activity

Goal: To reiterate the project goal.

Review "We the People" Statement (pg. 137)

⇨ Consider: Making a list of specific project goals or objectives, e.g. acquire at least $100 in donations, raise awareness, have fun! Be thoughtful when setting specific goals or objectives when it comes to acquiring donations (monetary or in-kind). Youth may have difficulty understanding what they can reasonably accomplish, so ask some guided questions to help youth think about it, e.g. How many people would have to donate just $5 in order to reach that goal?

⇨ Consider: Adding a visioning activity. Ask youth to imagine that it's the day after their service project, and everything went perfectly. Ask them some questions about how the project went (e.g. What happened? Who was there? How did people feel?). You could give them some time to write or draw their individual visions and then discuss those visions as a group. This could also lead into creating a list of project goals or objectives.

Unit 6B: Lesson

Goal: To develop a plan of action and assign responsibilities that cannot be completed during the planning session.

Planning the Project (pg. 139, Handouts pgs. 143-144)

⇨ Think about: Supplies necessary. Planning the project will probably mean that youth will need to use phones, phone books, and/or computers with Internet access. Coordinate having these available for youth before you begin project planning.

⇨ Think about: Task forces you'll need. If facilitating all of Unit 6 in one session, facilitators may not have time to create a list of task forces based on the specific project youth have chosen. Youth can also be involved in the process of deciding what task forces are necessary. Consider leading them through a group discussion of the different areas that groups will need to work on to plan the project. In this way, they can develop a list of task forces themselves. You can use the Task Force handout in the *Roadmap* to give them an idea of some of possible task forces.

⇨ Think about: How participants will be assigned to a task force. Consider having youth choose their top three task forces and then assigning them based on those choices. Doing this will take additional time, so plan to give participants a break or have an energizer while groups are being assigned. You could also split Unit 6 into multiple sessions and assign the task forces between sessions, or you could let youth choose their task forces.

⇨ Think about: How to get youth started on the planning. You could come up with a short list of questions for each task force (e.g. Where is the service project going to be held? Are we limited in location for the service project? Who can we ask to host the service project?), and then have them brainstorm an additional list of questions within their groups.

⇨ When facilitating: Have youth choose a group leader or representative for the Operations Task Force when they first meet in their groups. Have a list of additional responsibilities that group leads will take on.

⇨ When facilitating: Have youth concentrate first on listing or planning what they need to accomplish, not necessarily how they're going to do it. Once they have a good idea of their different responsibilities, have them move on to how they're going to accomplish their to-do list.

Unit 6B: Reflection

Goal: To review and plan any assignments.

Review Assignments (pg. 141)

⇨ When facilitating: Ensure that each group member is clear on any tasks they are responsible for accomplishing outside of group time.

⇨ When facilitating: Have groups report out before ending the session. This can help make sure that more than one task force isn't planning to work on the same task.